



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CECG

16 August 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR HQUSACE STAFF PRINCIPLES AND USACE COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Communication Principles

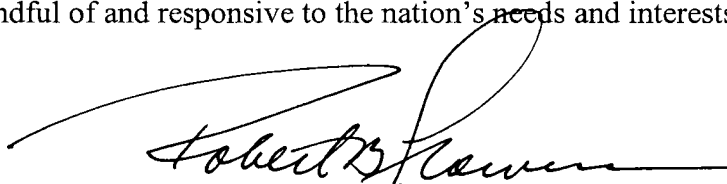
1. Today I am pleased to present the Communication Principles to the Corps family. They set forth my philosophy and direction regarding communication among Corps members and to those outside the organization. They are the standard to which we must hold all our communications.
2. At a series of listening sessions held across the country in 2000, we learned that many stakeholders and members of the public seek a better understanding of our processes. Openness in government is the ideal in a democracy and essential to accountability. Yet our critics say we are not open and must be reformed to ensure that the public and scientific experts have a better opportunity to view and critique our studies and projects. While we have built-in public review as required by law, this repeated criticism tells me that we have not always communicated as openly, as frequently, or as clearly as needed. Proactive communications will become a cornerstone of our business processes, from routine to complex or controversial. We will **not** wait to be asked, but will constantly be alert for opportunities to provide information needed to enhance understanding whether there is agreement or not.
3. Bringing synergy to our business processes also requires all members of the Corps team to be able to listen and work collaboratively with many people representing varied and conflicting interests. The nation's needs today are far more diverse and complex than ever before. The above-mentioned listening sessions also showed us that citizens desire a greater voice and interest in our work. It is our responsibility to ensure they are included in Project Delivery Teams and through other venues in order to make them part of the solution. Yes, it takes longer and it may not be as easy as we've been accustomed to. But when we build collaborative relationships, we grow more attuned to the needs and values of those we serve -- and that enables us to anticipate issues and problems early on and address them as a responsive federal agency working for the people. Our stakeholders today are numerous and have conflicting objectives—that makes our job harder. We are not a single purpose Federal agency. We seek consensus. We will foster dialog, and spend more time listening than talking.

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4. The same principles that apply outside the organization are crucial within. A free flow of information within the Corps will provide the basis for capturing lessons learned and speed us along the way to becoming a Learning Organization. Communication is essential to the kind of teamwork we seek within the Project Management Business Process. If we're doing it right, not only will every significant project (and project management plan) have a communication plan, but also every team will evaluate its communications regularly and seek to improve them.

5. I will be conducting chain teaching in mid-September, but I encourage you to begin using and implementing these principles today. I believe these communication principles will help to keep us mindful of and responsive to the nation's needs and interests. Essayons!



ROBERT B. FLOWERS
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

Enclosure

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has proudly served the American people for more than 200 years. In war and in peace, the Corps provides essential services to the Army and the nation, working closely with a variety of valued constituencies.

Accordingly, effective, two-way communication with these constituencies helps us build positive, mutually respectful relationships that are important to the successful accomplishment of our mission. To build and maintain these relationships by fostering a climate of effective, two-way communication, the Corps dedicates itself to the following communication principles. The Corps will:

- **Listen to all constituencies both inside and outside USACE regarding issues of importance to them, respecting their viewpoints. Seek opportunities for synergy.**
- **Communicate early, clearly, completely, honestly, accurately, and often with all constituencies on issues of importance.**
- **Incorporate communication as an integral part of the project management business process.**
- **Be accessible to all constituencies and respond promptly without censorship or misinformation.**
- **Proactively inform the public and other constituencies of the Corps' vital role in areas where we have special expertise.**
- **Do what we say we will do.**

The policy of the Corps is to communicate in an open, factual, and timely way with the Corps team, the American people, the Administration, Congress, the international community, tribes and the news media. We will make relevant information fully and readily available to these constituencies consistent with law and national security interests.